

76. When dealing with Timoti Puhipi, and when asking him to agree to the sale, did he not at first object?—He did, and would not go there at all only through pure respect for myself.

77. And did he not consider that the timber upon the land was worth a considerable amount of money?—He did; and it is so.

78. Was not that one of the reasons which made him not anxious to sell for the latter price?—No; the reason why is that he was answerable to Sam Yates for £200, and offered one portion of the block to Sam Yates.

79. Did he not consent to sell the land to the Government upon your assuring him that the Government did not want the timber upon it, thus leading him to believe that though he sold his land—his share—to the Government, he could afterwards remove the timber?—This is the first time I heard of that. He did not. He told me there was gold in it, and not to sell it, and that there was totara and puriri in it.

80. Then, you consider that the Natives were well paid for the land when they received 4s. 6d.?—Yes; they never got as much before.

81. Then, the inference must be that the Government have paid too much for it?—No, the inference is that they did not know the value of the land, and they were hungry for money.

82. I would like you to tell the Committee what authority you had from the Natives to offer these lands to the Government on the 8th October last?—It was verbal authority from different owners, given at different times for the last fifteen years. I have gone to the Land Office in Auckland with the owners, inquiring as to the position of the law and titles.

83. Did you not tell Mr. Cadman, when you waited upon him at Wellington, that you had authority from the Natives to sell the Kaitaia Block for 7s. 6d. an acre?—I may have told Mr. Cadman, but I had no written authority for saying so.

84. But you did tell him that you were offering that land for 7s. 6d. an acre?—I never did. I never told anybody that.

85. Do you mean to tell the Committee that you did not tell Mr. Cadman that the Natives were willing to sell that land at 7s. 6d. an acre?—I did not. Mr. Cadman offered 7s. 6d. I said that was plenty.

86. When Mr. Cadman agreed to pay 7s. 6d. for the land, do you think that he had any knowledge that you were going to pay the Natives less than 7s. 6d.?—He had no knowledge, nor had I any.

87. And do you think that, if he had, he would have authorised you to go on with the purchase?—I cannot tell what Mr. Cadman thought.

88. You cannot suggest to the Committee upon what day, prior to your seeing Mr. Cadman, the Natives agreed that you were to act as their agent to sell the land to the Crown?—I have been living in this district off and on for twenty-two years, and they told me at different times that if I could get purchasers for everything they have got—pigs, cattle, timber, and everything else—I should have power to act, and I did look for buyers for them.

89. Without any written authority?—Yes; and without any emolument.

90. Why did you think it necessary to get a written authority from the Natives on this occasion?—Because I was dealing with Government money.

91. If you were dealing with Government money, you must have been purchasing that land for the Government?—I was not; but, surely, a Government cheque is Government money.

92. If you were not purchasing that land for the Government, whom were you purchasing it for?—I was not purchasing the land; I was selling it. I never said I was purchasing it.

93. *Mr. W. Kelly.*] What did the purchase of the block cost you, exclusive of your own time and trouble? Give me it as near as you can?—About £130.

94. *The Chairman.*] That is the Kaitaia Block of land?—Yes.

95. *Mr. W. Kelly.*] When you saw Mr. Cadman you told him you were acting for the Natives?—I did; and told everybody else.

96. And you submitted the blocks to the Government at a fixed price?—I remember the applications, but there was no price fixed.

97. I thought you fixed the price?—No.

98. Who fixed the price?—The Surveyor-General and Mr. Cadman.

99. Did Mr. Clark, J.P., get any expenses?—He charged a guinea for every time he attended.

100. *Hon. Mr. Cadman.*] You have stated that the charges on this block came to £130, exclusive of your own time and expenses: what do you estimate your own time and expenses at?—My time is sometimes worth nothing, and sometimes it is worth a great deal.

101. Give the Committee a fair estimate of what you think your time is worth?—I consider that my time and expenses would not be covered by less than £100.

102. *Mr. Kapa.*] Was it you who ordered Mr. Cochrane to make out this agreement that these Natives signed?—Yes.

103. Is it stated in that agreement that you were to receive 3s. over and above 4s. 6d. that was paid to the Natives?—There was nothing about 3s. in it. It was 4s. and expenses, and I did not get 3s.

104. Were you aware that the Government intended to pay 7s. 6d. an acre for it?—Yes.

105. How was it that you did not receive 3s., as you know that was the amount over and above 4s. 6d.?—Because I paid all expenses.

106. And were the expenses paid out of the 3s. over and above the 4s. 6d.?—Yes.

107. Do you not think that is how the Natives were deceived, by your not telling them you were going to get 3s. over and above the 4s. 6d.?—No; they were asking me to give them as much as I could get myself—£1 if I could.

108. If you knew that you were going to get 7s. 6d. from the Government why did you offer the Natives 4s. 6d.?—Because I thought it was a good price, and that they were satisfied with it, and because I could buy it for less.